

## **APLC Standing Committee meetings 2011**

### **General status and operation of the Convention**

#### **Statement by Ireland on retention of AP mines for permitted purposes (Article 3)**

**Friday, 25 May 2012**

Co-Chairs,

As you are aware, Article 3 of the Convention permits the retention or transfer of anti-personnel mines for the development of and training in mine detection, mine clearance, or mine destruction techniques.

Ireland possesses a small number of anti-personnel mines for these purposes, and I am happy to provide the Committee with an update in this regard.

In line with the *'Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014: Ending the Suffering Caused by Antipersonnel Mines'*, Ireland has adhered to action #56 and has "regularly review(ed) the number of anti-personnel mines retained, to ensure that they constitute the minimum number absolutely necessary for the purposes permitted by the Convention..."

Ireland has provided information in its Article 7 report on the use of mines retained for permitted purposes. This report is now available on the relevant page on the website of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

Furthermore, Ireland has also "...destroy(ed) all those (mines) exceeding that number and where appropriate, explore(d) available alternatives to using live anti-personnel mines for training and research activities."

Ireland's Defence Forces personnel, when they are deployed overseas, have frequently encountered mines and therefore, it is vital to the safety and security of Defence Forces personnel that they receive the necessary ordnance training. The Irish Defence Forces use live anti-personnel mines in the development and validation of

mine render safe procedures and in training personnel in these procedures. The render safe procedures normally involve the destruction of the mine.

Additionally, live mines are also used as part of the testing and validation of mechanical mine clearance equipment and in the training of personnel in the use of such equipment. Minimum metal content mines are used, as required, in the calibration and testing of mine detection equipments.

I would like to take the opportunity to state that as the number of anti-personnel mines currently possessed by Ireland for permitted purposes has fallen to a very low level (with only 62 remaining as at 31 December 2011) the acquisition of replacement anti-personnel mines for the same purposes, as permitted by Article 3 of the Convention, is likely to become necessary at some stage in the future.

Thank you for your attention.